

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 24, 2013

The Honorable Hillary Clinton
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Madame Secretary:

We write to applaud last week's historic decision to approve U.S. recognition of the new Somali government. We appreciate the complex factors our government considered in taking this step after decades of lawlessness and political transition in Somalia. Now, with the establishment of the first permanent government in 22 years, we write to express support for a strong U.S.-Somali bilateral relationship.

More than 20 members of the U.S. House of Representatives, including the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, met with President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud on January 15, 2013. We were impressed by his background as an academic and civic activist, dedication to the democratic process, and commitment to providing security for all Somalis. As the first leader of a representative Somali government in more than two decades, President Hassan Sheikh demonstrates a seriousness of purpose that is essential to meeting the challenges his country faces.

We look forward to working with you and your colleagues to forge a new chapter in U.S.-Somali relations. We acknowledge that reopening a U.S. embassy in Mogadishu is not imminent, but hope that normal diplomatic relations can be restored as soon as possible. This moment may be our best opportunity in decades to promote peace, stability and good governance in Somalia, and our own national security interests in the region.

Sincerely,



Keith Ellison
Member of Congress



Eliot Engel
Member of Congress

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515



Karen Bass
Member of Congress



Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



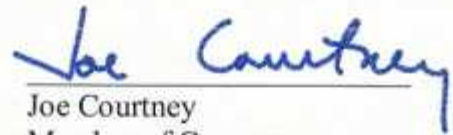
Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress



Mike Michaud
Member of Congress



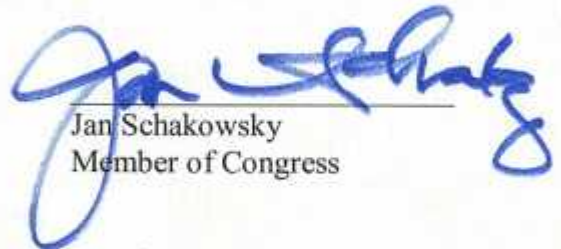
Joyce Beatty
Member of Congress



Joe Courtney
Member of Congress



Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Rick Nolan
Member of Congress



Hank Johnson
Member of Congress



Jim McDermott
Member of Congress